IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-7, amend claims 8-15, and add claims 16 and 17 as follows.

1-7   (Canceled)

1   8.   (Currently amended) Sample observation method ~~characterized by~~

2 comprising steps of:

3   acquiring a reference sample image not including any defect on a sample

4 ~~by capturing an image of the sample~~ with an imager, based on ~~the~~ information on a defect

5 ~~developed~~ on the sample ~~and~~ detected by an inspection apparatus;

6   moving the sample in a viewing field of the imager and acquiring a

7 defective sample image including the defect on the sample ~~by capturing a image of the~~

8 ~~sample~~ at a first scale factor with the imager, based on the information on the defect

9 ~~developed~~ on the sample ~~and~~ detected by the inspection apparatus;

10   locating the defect on the defective sample image by comparing the

11 reference sample image and the defective sample image;

12   ~~capturing~~ acquiring a magnified ~~view of the local area where~~ image of the

13 located defect ~~exists within the area whose view has been captured as the defective~~

14 ~~sample image, thus acquiring a magnified image of the defect~~ at a second scale factor

15 greater than the first scale factor with the imager without moving the sample; and

16   displaying the magnified image of the defect on a screen.

1   9.   (Currently amended) Sample observation method ~~characterized by~~

2 comprising the steps of:

3   acquiring a reference sample image not including any defect on a sample

4 ~~by capturing an image of the sample~~ with an imager, based on ~~the~~ information on a defect

5 ~~developed~~ on the sample ~~and~~ detected by an inspection apparatus;

6   adjusting ~~the~~ a position of the sample so that the defect will fall within the

7   field of view of ~~image capture~~ said imager, based on the information ~~on the defect~~

8   ~~developed on the sample and detected by the inspection apparatus~~;

9   acquiring a defective sample image including the defect on the sample ~~by~~

10   ~~capturing an image of the sample in the adjusted position~~ at a first scale factor by said

11   imager;

12   locating the defect on the defective sample image by comparing the

13   reference sample image and the defective sample image;

14   ~~capturing~~ acquiring a magnified ~~view of the local area where~~ image of the

15   located defect ~~exists within the field view of image capture, thus acquiring a magnified~~

16   ~~image of the defect~~ at a second scale factor greater than the first scale factor with said

17   imager without changing the position of the sample; and

18   displaying the magnified image of the defect on a screen.

1   10.   (Currently amended) Sample observation method ~~characterized by~~

2   according to claim 9 further comprising, subsequent to the step of acquiring a magnified

3   image, a step of:

4   ~~acquiring a reference sample image not including any defect on a sample~~

5   ~~by capturing an image of the sample, based on the information on a defect developed on~~

6   ~~the sample and detected by an inspection apparatus;~~

7   ~~acquiring a defective sample image including the defect on the sample by~~

8   ~~capturing an image of the sample, based on the information on the defect developed on~~

9   ~~the sample and detected by the inspection apparatus~~

10   ~~locating the defect on the defective sample image by comparing the~~

11   ~~reference sample image and the defective sample image;~~

12   ~~capturing a magnified view of the local area where the located defect~~

13   ~~exists within the area whose view has been captured as the defective sample image, thus~~

14   ~~acquiring a magnified image of the defect;~~

15   erasing ~~the~~ a background from the magnified image of the <u>located</u> defect~~;~~

16   ~~and~~

17   ~~displaying on a screen the magnified image of the defect from where the~~

18   ~~background has been erased~~.

1   11.   (Currently amended) Sample observation method according to

2   any one of claims 8, 9, and 10, ~~characterized in that~~ <u>wherein</u> the reference sample image

3   and the defective sample images are the images of the sample captured in secondary

4   electrons ~~reflected~~ <u>emanated</u> from the sample ~~irradiated with~~ <u>by irradiation of a</u> charged

5   particle ~~beams~~ <u>beam</u>.

1   12.   (Currently amended) ~~Sample observation equipment intended~~ <u>An</u>

2   <u>apparatus</u> for observing samples, ~~characterized by~~ comprising:

3   image pickup means ~~to capture a view of a sample, thus~~ <u>for</u> acquiring an

4   image of ~~the~~ <u>a</u> sample;

5   storage means to ~~receive and~~ store ~~data about a desired~~ <u>information of an</u>

6   area ~~of~~ <u>to be observed on</u> the sample~~, the view of the area to be captured by the image~~

7   ~~pickup means, from the external~~;

8   <u>a</u> position ~~control means~~ <u>controller</u> to control ~~the~~ <u>a</u> position of the sample

9   ~~toward~~ <u>with respect to</u> the image pickup means, based on the ~~data about the desired area~~

10   ~~of the sample~~ <u>information</u> stored ~~into~~ <u>in</u> the storage means;

11   display means to display images of the sample acquired by ~~being captured~~

12   ~~by~~ the image pickup means; and

13   ~~arithmetic~~ control means to locate a defect on the sample by comparing a

14   plurality of images of the sample ~~zoomed-in by first scale factor and~~ captured by the

15   image pickup means <u>at a first scale factor</u> after the sample is positioned by the position

16   ~~control means~~ <u>controller</u> and ~~make the display means display an image of the defect~~

17   ~~zoomed-in by second scale factor that is larger than the first scale factor, together with an~~

18   ~~image including the defect captured at the first scale factor~~ <u>to control the image pickup</u>

19   means to acquire the located defect image at a second scale factor greater than the first

20   scale factor without changing the position of the sample.

1   13.   (Currently amended)   ~~Sample observation equipment intended~~ An

2   apparatus for observing samples, ~~characterized by~~ comprising:

3   storage means to ~~receive and~~ store ~~the~~ information on a defect ~~developed~~

4   on a sample ~~acquired through inspection with~~ detected by an external defect inspection

5   apparatus ~~from the defect inspection apparatus~~;

6   image pickup means ~~to capture a view of the sample, thus~~ for acquiring an

7   image of the sample;

8   position control means to control ~~the~~ a position of the sample, based on the

9   information ~~on the defect developed on the sample~~ stored ~~into~~ in the storage means;

10   defect locating means to locate the defect by comparing an image of the

11   sample not including the defect and an image of the sample including the defect,

12   ~~zoomed in by first scale factor and captured~~ wherein both of the images are acquired at a

13   first scale factor by the image pickup means after the sample is positioned by the position

14   control means~~, and display the image including the defect on a screen~~; and

15   ~~magnified defect~~ display means to display ~~a magnified~~ an image of the

16   defect located by the defect locating means~~, the image~~ and captured by the image pickup

17   means at a second scale factor that is ~~larger~~ greater than the first scale factor without

18   changing the position of the sample.

1   14.   (Currently amended)   ~~Sample observation equipment intended~~ An

2   apparatus for observing samples, ~~characterized by~~ comprising:

3   image pickup means ~~to capture a view of a sample, thus~~ for acquiring an

4   image of the sample;

5   position control means to control ~~the~~ a position of the sample so that a

6   defect on the sample will fall within the field of view of the image pickup means, based

7   on ~~the~~ information on the defect on the sample ~~acquired through inspection with~~ detected

8   by an external defect inspection apparatus;

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9   defect locating means to locate the defect by comparing an image of the

10   sample not including the defect and an image of the sample including the defect,

11   ~~zoomed-in by first scale factor and captured~~ wherein both of the images are acquired by

12   the image pickup means at a first scale factor after the sample is positioned by the

13   position control means~~, and display on a screen the image of the sample including the~~

14   ~~defect thus located~~; and

15   ~~magnified defect~~ display means to display ~~a magnified~~ an image of ~~a local~~

16   ~~area of the sample corresponding to the location of~~ the defect ~~on the image of the sample~~

17   ~~including the defect displayed on the screen of~~ located by the defect locating means~~, the~~

18   ~~image~~ and captured by the image pickup means at a second scale factor that is ~~larger~~

19   greater than the first scale factor without changing the position of the sample.

1   15.   (Currently amended) Sample observation equipment according to

2   any one of claims 12 , 13 , and 14~~-~~; ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the image pickup means

3   is a scanning electron microscope.

1   16.   (New) Sample observation method according to claim 8, further

2   comprising steps of:

3   moving the sample to acquire a magnified image of the reference sample

4   with the imager;

5   acquiring a magnified image of the reference sample at the second scale

6   factor with the imager; and

7   displaying the magnified image of the reference sample on the screen with

8   the magnified image of the located defect.

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1   17.   (New) Sample observation method according to claim 9, further

2   comprising steps of:

3   moving the sample to acquire a magnified image of the reference sample

4   with the imager;

5   acquiring a magnified image of the reference sample at the second scale

6   factor with the imager; and

7   displaying the magnified image of the reference sample on the screen with

8   the magnified image of the located defect.